



August 2018

Georgia Board of Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors **Board Matters**

NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Where are We Today, and Where are We Going Tomorrow?

Let me begin by thanking my predecessor, Bill Womack, PE, for his service the past two years as Chairman of the Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors (PELS) Board. Through his dedication and under his leadership, we accomplished many things, notably modernizing Rule 180-6-.03 to better define “Direct Supervision and Direct Supervisory Control,” comprehensive revision of the Survey Law, the initial efforts for the new Special Structural Rule, and launch of this Newsletter. On behalf of the Board and the 22,000 plus registered professionals in this State, let me express our gratitude and thanks, and commend you for a job well done.



*Dan Davis, PE
Board Chair*

Several professions claim to be “the world’s second oldest profession.” Among those making that claim are surveyors. I imagine that our early ancestors in surveying played a significant role in many of the world’s wonders from antiquity, from the Great Pyramids in Egypt to the aqueducts in Rome. So where are we today?

Today, engineers and surveyors play critical roles in this wonderful State of ours, from striving to keep the air we breathe healthy, to safe transport between our homes, jobs and workplaces, to assisting with groundbreaking advances in medical devices and procedures. A significant workforce of engineers and surveyors are needed to meet these demands, and thus the PELS Board was constituted in 1937 by Georgia Legislature to regulate and set standards for these professions. Today, the PELS Board and Secretary of State staff process every year approximately 900 applications for examination and certification, 1,200 applications for Comity, 350 applications for Certificate of Authorization, 30 applications for reinstatement, and 30-50 complaints, as well as approximately 22,000 renewals every two years. The Secretary of State staff assigned to the PELS Board is quite stretched in keeping up with this caseload as well as the other five boards they serve.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

STATS - Licenses Issued	2
Board Law, Rules & Policy	3
Member Highlight	4
NCEES News	5
Housekeeping	6
Disciplinary Actions.....	7

BOARD MEMBERS

Dan Davis, PE, Board Chair
Russ Pennington, PE, Vice Chair
William Womack, PE
Mark E. Chastain, LS
Elmo A. Richardson, PE, LS
Darien Sykes, PE
Neil Wyche, PE
Taylor P. Wright, PE
Julianne Busbee, Consumer Member
Darren Mickler, Executive Director



STATS Licenses Issued

September 2017 - July 2018

- Professional Engineer — 1,380
- Engineer Firm — 216
- Engineer In-Training — 462
- Land Surveyor — 21
- Land Surveyor Firm — 18
- Land Surveyor In-Training — 15

NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN (CONTINUED)

Back to my question, so where are we today? My children accuse me at times of being old fashioned, but I scratch my head and at the same time marvel at some of the ways technology has improved the delivery of our services. Computers and software for data processing, design, and modeling were rapidly gaining a place in our profession when I started my career in 1984. Today, tablets and cell phones provide ready access in the field with sophisticated and comprehensive data sets on the servers at our offices. Survey data can now be compiled in the office, literally as the field work is being done throughout the day. Digital pictures fly through the air to elicit an immediate response and feedback from an engineer across the globe. Clients come to our offices and no longer have to stretch their imaginations, as 3D virtual models guide tours of the wonderful things we design. Satellites are used to pinpoint the world's most sensitive ecosystems. Technology has certainly improved our ability to make better use of our limited resources and do more with less, and perhaps help us design healthier places to live, work and play.

So where are we going? Back to the part of being old fashioned. Artificial Intelligence is being developed and refined at lightning speeds now. Drones, robots, Alexa, autonomous vehicles....all these technologies are overwhelming at times. Will we as engineers and surveyors still have jobs 50 years from now, or will we be sitting in the co-pilot seat as one of these technologies does our job? I don't know the answer to this, but I fall back on the comfort of being affiliated with the world's second oldest profession, while observing that fundamentals have always served us well. These fundamentals were advanced by our predecessors over generations who then wrote them into the laws, rules and policies that regulate our profession. I believe that the public we serve benefits when we, the young and old, ground ourselves on these fundamentals each and every day. Here are a few of these fundamentals:

- *Education and more education.* Reading, writing and arithmetic with physics and chemistry mixed in. The faculties at our colleges and universities continue to do a great job of educating our future workforce and staying on the forefront of technology advances. We should, however, embrace some of the other learning opportunities available to us in our colleges and universities. Our profession benefits when we have better communication skills, people and leadership skills, business skills, knowledge of history, politics, philosophy, and the natural sciences, among many others.
- *Experience.* Nothing replaces experience. As I look back on the day when I received my PE license, I realize now, that while I was receiving a license to be the Engineer of Record on a project, I was at the same time receiving a license to continue learning. I was learning from the care and wisdom of those who were kind enough to encourage my advancement because they cared for the profession and those who are served by it.
- *Practicing in our area of competence and expertise.* Technology isn't going to facilitate competence or imbue expertise. Betterment of the public's safety, health, and welfare are driving increased specialization. Limited energy and natural resources, and the need for healthy places to live, work and play are best served by us when we each practice in our area of expertise.
- *Ethics, such an overgeneralized word.* After 30 years in this profession, I believe more than ever that professionalism and ethics are one of the very backbones of our profession. Avoiding conflicts of interest, being centered on the truth, providing "direct oversight and supervision", and treating all, in-

OUR BOARD



Dan Davis, PE
Board Chair
(Civil)



Russ Pennington, PE
Vice Chair
(Civil)



Mark E. Chastain, LS
(Survey)



William Womack, PE
(Electrical)



Elmo A. Richardson,
PE, LS
(Survey)



Darien Sykes, PE
(Structural)



Neil Wyche, PE
(Mechanical)



Taylor P. Wright, PE
(Civil)



Julianne Busbee
Consumer Member



Darren Mickler
Executive Director

NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN (CONTINUED)

cluding our competitors, with courtesy and professionalism, are among the virtues of ethics. My father and both grandfathers often told me that, “there is only one thing they can’t take away from you in this world...your reputation”; and also that, “your reputation is the only thing you can take with you to the grave.”

I close by reminding you, my fellow registered professionals, that we must continue to earn the public’s trust every day. We must do our best to protect the public’s safety, health, and welfare. We must shepherd our client’s limited resources judiciously. When we do these things, our profession will continue to enjoy an esteemed place in our society. Regardless of what role technology plays in the future, we must ground ourselves in these fundamentals.

BOARD LAW, RULES & POLICY

SWEEPING CHANGES TO LAND SURVEYING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

SB 425 was signed into law on May 7, 2018 and becomes effective on July 1, 2018. The two primary changes are that hydrology requirements will become optional and the amount of course work in surveying subjects will increase. There is a two year transition or “grandfathering” period where the prior requirements will be acceptable, as well as the new.



The previous term of Land Surveyor in Training (LSIT) is replaced with Surveyor Intern (SI). A licensed surveyor is now recognized as a Professional Land Surveyor (PLS) instead of Registered Land Surveyor (RLS), although a licensee can use either title they choose. Experience requirements are unchanged. PLS licensure requires passage of the NCEES professional practice (PS) exam which is a six-hour exam. Additionally, Georgia administers two state-specific exams: Law & History, and Hydrology & Design. The Hydrology & Design exam is becoming optional with the new law.

The previous education requirements included 15-quarter hours in land surveying courses plus five-quarter hours in applied hydrology, which includes engineering prerequisites. The new requirements are 18-semester hours in land surveying topics. The hydrology exam may only be taken by applicants who pass additional course work in engineering and hydrology.

Land surveyors who are licensed prior to July 1, 2018 and those who opt to and pass the hydrology exam will be designated as “Hydrology and Design Authorized” on their license registry. Other surveyor licenses will be noted as “active” licenses only. Other surveyors may continue to prepare site plans and NPDES plans similarly to other professionals, but may not design sanitary sewer, water line extensions, or storm drainage structures as outlined in OCGA 43-15-13.1.

The Board of Registration is grateful to Senator Gooch and Representatives Rakestraw and Maxwell for their diligent hard work getting this bill through the legislative process. FAQs follow.

BOARD LAW, RULES & POLICY (CONTINUED)

1. **Q:** *I've passed all of the exams except hydrology, what do I need to do in order to get licensed?*
A: A supplemental application will be required including verification of any additional surveying experience since your last application. If you passed the Georgia Law & History exam in 2013 or later, you will be eligible for licensure without additional examination. If the Law & History exam was taken prior to 2013 (when it was updated), you will need to take the new Law & History exam.
2. **Q:** *I'm pursuing my LSIT and am about to start the hydrology and engineering courses, can I take additional surveying course work instead?*
A: Absolutely. The option to provide 18 semester hours of surveying course work (with no hydrology coursework) begins July 1, 2020.
3. **Q:** *Where can I get the required surveying education?*
A: The Board policy states that "courses will be acceptable if successfully passed at a college or university where the degree or certificate program has achieved applicable accreditation." Continuing education courses are not applicable. Program acceptance will consider the acceptance of such coursework for transfer credit to other institutions. Some colleges and universities offer course work online. The Board does not discriminate against online education, but the need for actual lab time and practical learning can't be neglected. The Board will consider proctored labs and experience with employers.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

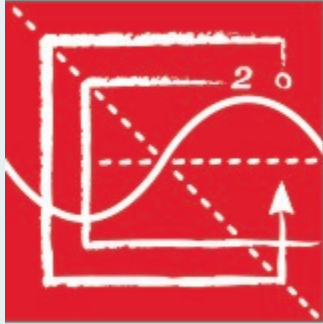
Russ Pennington, PE was appointed to the Georgia PELS Board in 2014, and he is currently serving as the Vice Chair of the Board. His Board appointment represents the civil engineering discipline.

Russ attended the University of Georgia (UGA), where he received a bachelor's degree in Biological Engineering (Environmental Emphasis). After graduating from UGA, he joined HDR in 2001 working in their water and wastewater practice while obtaining his MBA, which he received from the UGA in 2006. Russ left HDR in 2012 to become the Director of Policy and Public Affairs for the Georgia Environmental Protection Division until 2015 when Governor Nathan Deal called on him to serve as Deputy Director of the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA). During his time at GEFA, Russ also served as the Director of the Governor's Water Supply Program, dealing primarily with the water wars with Alabama and Florida. In June 2015, he formed Pennington Consulting Services, specializing in environmental and regulatory affairs. Russ currently works for McGuire Woods Consulting, where he serves as a Sr. Vice President and Government Affairs Advisor.

Russ also serves on the UGA Alumni Board and the Georgia Conservancy Board of Trustees. He and his wife of 15 years, Kelli, first met at the UGA, where Kelli earned her Business degree. They currently reside in Brookhaven with their two girls, Caroline (9 years old) and Eleanor (5 years old). When not pursuing his passion for politics, Russ enjoys exercising, reading, traveling, and hunting.



Russ Pennington, PE



NCEES NEWS

The Southern Zone Interim Meeting convened in Charlottesville, VA during April 19-21, 2018. The Southern Zone is comprised of 13 states, plus Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The attendees represented all Southern Zone member boards. The delegates from the Georgia Board were Bill Womack and Neil Wyche.

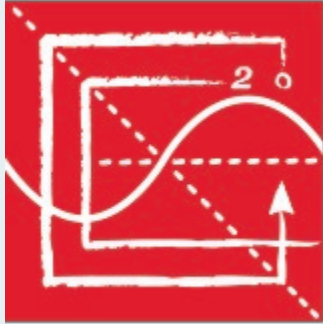
Election of Officers: Ivan Hoffman P.S. (AR) was elected for a two-year term as the new Southern Zone Secretary-Treasurer.

The structure of the Zone Meeting includes a number of reports from national NCEES officers, Committees, and Task Forces. The following are notable items presented from these groups.

- **Exams Process** – FE exams continue to see increased numbers since transitioning to CBT (computer based testing). Year-round FE and FS testing began in 2016. The PS exam and PE Chemical exam have also transitioned to CBT, with PE Nuclear to follow in October. Other PE disciplines are also working towards CBT and exam committees are currently working on reference materials, handouts, and other options. It is projected that all PE exams will transition to CBT by 2024 and most will be offered on a year-round administration.
- **Exam News** – The PE Software Engineering exam will be discontinued after the April 2019 testing due to the low number of candidates.
- **Exam News** – The NCEES Surveying Exam Task Force has undertaken a review of the surveying profession across all Zones to determine if the current testing format is meeting the testing goal of minimal competency with the PS

exam. One alternative approach is a modular exam option. This format would offer a static section of the exam, with module options in public land state surveying, Metes and Bounds surveying, and mapping science. Challenges introduced by new technologies will impact scopes of practice and the determination of competency.

- **Threats to Licensure** – The engineering and surveying professions have been under significant threats for a number of years from lobbying forces which have sought to reduce or totally eliminate licensure requirements. NCEES supports enhanced mobility for licensure and improved means of educating the public and state legislators on the importance of licensure. A Public Outreach Task Force has been commissioned to assist member boards with these threats at the state level. The National Society for Professional Engineers (NSPE) provides a Legislative Action Center in its website with relevant information about issues that might impact licensure.
- **Law Enforcement** – Representatives from various boards met to discuss issues related to enforcement and discipline actions. NCEES offers an Enforcement Exchange that all boards may use to either input information for Discipline Actions in that state, or to review actions that may have been taken by other states against a licensee. The Enforcement Exchange also has additional resources available to member boards for investigations, including an Investigative Guidelines Manual. Another subject discussed is the use of social media by licensees and concerns of potential false advertising for engi-



NCEES NEWS (CONTINUED)

neering or surveying services, violating specific state law and board rules.

- **Georgia Board Activities** – A brief summary of the Georgia Board administrative activities was presented. These include developing the revisions to our current law concerning Surveying in the State of Georgia. This legislation has changed the educational requirements for Surveying, with transition over the next two years. The board is presently developing updates for the various Engineering and Surveying application documents. These modifications will assist applicants to provide the correct information needed when submitted to the Board for review.
- **Annual Meeting** – The 2018 NCEES Annual meeting is scheduled for August, to be held in Scottsdale, Arizona.

DISCONTINUATION OF SOFTWARE ENGINEERING PE EXAM

Since the original offering of the Software Engineering PE exam in April 2013, there have been only 81 candidates that have requested seating for this exam. For the April 2018 admin-

istration, only 19 have registered to take the Software Engineering exam. Per NCEES exam development policy, the Committee on Examination Policy and Procedure (EPP) is required to review the history of any exam where there have been fewer than 50 total first-time examinees, in two consecutive administrations, from NCEES jurisdictions and provide recommendations to the NCEES Board of Directors concerning the desirability of continuing the examination.

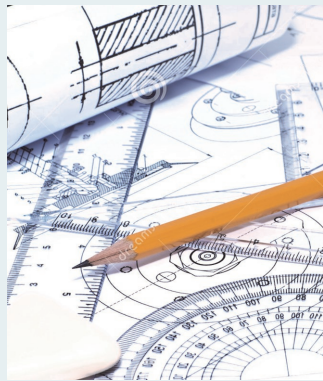
At the January 2018 meeting, the EPP considered the history of the Software Engineering exam, the low candidate population and the potential for enlarging the number of first-time examinees. After consideration of all information, the EPP recommended that the software exam be discontinued as soon as possible.

At the February 2018 meeting, the NCEES Board of Directors received and adopted the recommendation from the EPP to discontinue offering the Software Engineering exam. Since this exam is offered only once per year, the NCEES Board directed that the Software Engineering exam be discontinued subsequent to the April 2019 exam administration.

HOUSEKEEPING

NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Board is currently in the process of updating the state specific Law and Rules of Land Surveying examination. Due to changes in Georgia law pursuant to SB425, HB1004, and related Board Rules, the test question pool is being reviewed and revised as necessary. While these revisions are being made, both the Law and Rules examination and the Hydrology examination will be suspended by the testing service. We expect this to be a relatively short process and should be completed by the time this newsletter is published. Please check the testing website at www.psionline.com to determine when the examination will be available.



DATES OF INTEREST

Board Meeting Oct 16 (GA Tech)

Board Meeting Dec 11 (Macon)

Georgia Board of Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors

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DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS (SEP 2017 – JUL 2018)

- **Afsar Hasan** (PELS170051) PEO37803. Discipline in Another Jurisdiction. Public Consent Order - Respondent entered into a Settlement Agreement with the Missouri Board based on the determination that the Respondent signed and sealed a set of plans for a project that was prepared by an architectural firm with which the Respondent had no formal affiliation and was not prepared under his supervision, resulting in aiding the unlicensed practice of engineering in Missouri.
- **Robin D Bell** (PELS170052) PEO23699. Discipline in Another Jurisdiction. Public Consent Order - Respondent pleaded guilty to a charge of Non-Violent Battery in South Carolina.
- **Kevin R Adams** (PELS170067) PEO24041. Discipline in Another Jurisdiction. Public Consent Order - The North Carolina Board found that Respondent violated a prior order of the NC Board and performed services outside his area of competence as a result of an investigation into engineering plans completed by Respondent.
- **William Todd Meadows** (PELS180004) PEO21060. Unlicensed Practice. Voluntary Cease and Desist Order.
- **Jason Randall Creasy Needham** (PELS180009) PEO35500. Discipline in Another Jurisdiction. Voluntary Surrender - Respondent pleaded guilty to one count of Fraud and Related Activity in connection with computers in Tennessee.
- **Nathan M McClure** (PELS170083) LS003086. Unethical Conduct. Public Consent Order with \$500.00 fine - Respondent improperly used an unlicensed person, paid directly by the client, to do field work on a survey completed in Georgia.
- **Matthew D Lewis** (PELS170077) PEO28146. Out of State Disc. Public Consent Order - A Settlement Stipulation in Florida was issued to this Respondent based on numerous allegations of material deficiencies with regards to the drawing for a fire protection system on a building addition in Florida, on which the Respondent was the Engineer of Record.
- **Charles Harold Moss** (PELS170053) PEO08738. Discipline in Another Jurisdiction. Public Consent Order - Respondent was found guilty of "performing engineering services outside any of his areas of competence" in Oklahoma.
- **Jeffrey Scott Ruppert** (PELS170056) PEO40909. Discipline in Another Jurisdiction. Public Consent Order - West Virginia Board found that the Respondent, in connection with his firm, had offered engineering services in West Virginia without the required license in violation of West Virginia engineering law.
- **Gilbert Enrique Quinones, QB Engineering** (PELS160023) LS002810. Unprofessional Conduct. Public Consent Order with \$500.00 fine - Respondent failed to set and properly cap lot corners as required by Rule 180-7-.05.
- **Kevin M Finn** (PELS170040) PEO23075. Discipline in another jurisdiction. The Respondent was issued a \$500.00 fine and Public Reprimand by the Georgia Board for the unlawful aiding and assisting of an unlicensed entity in the practice of engineering in Oklahoma. Also, the Respondent unlawfully affixed his professional engineer's seal, signature and date to engineering design drawings, calculations, and certificates, which were not prepared by him or under his direct control and supervision, on five separate projects.